

In Genesis 12:3 is the second person pronoun (you, thee) applying to Abraham in singular or plural form?

Gemini 3 Flash Thinking

In Genesis 12:3, the second-person pronoun applying to Abraham is **singular** in every instance within the original Hebrew text.

Grammatical Breakdown

The Hebrew text utilizes the **2nd person masculine singular** pronominal suffix (ךָ- or *-kā*). Although some English translations use "you" (which can be ambiguous in modern English), the Hebrew is precise.

Here is how the suffix functions in the three specific clauses of the verse:

- **"I will bless those who bless you"** (וְהִבְרַכְתִּי, *məḥ̄bāreḵēkā*): In this construction, the word for "those who bless" is a plural participle, but the suffix attached to it referring to Abraham is the **singular** -*kā*.
- **"The one who curses you"** (וְהִקְלָלְךָ, *ūməqal-lel-kā*): In this case, the participle for "the one who curses" is singular, and the suffix referring to Abraham is also the **singular** -*kā*.
- **"In you all the families..."** (בְּךָ, *bə-kā*): The preposition *b-* (meaning "in" or "through") is combined with the **singular** -*kā* suffix.

Theological Nuance

The shift in the Hebrew between the first two clauses is often noted by scholars: God says he will bless those (**plural**) who bless Abraham, but he will curse the individual (**singular**) who curses him. Regardless of the number of people acting upon Abraham, the "you" addressed in the text remains strictly singular, focusing the covenantal promise specifically on the patriarch himself.